



UK Tentative List of Potential Sites for World Heritage Nomination: Application form

Please save the application to your computer, fill in and email to:
UKTL.Application@culture.gsi.gov.uk

The application form should be completed using the boxes provided under each question, and, where possible, within the word limit indicated.

Please read the [Information Sheets](#) before completing the application form. It is also essential to refer to the accompanying [Guidance Note](#) for help with each question, and to the relevant paragraphs of UNESCO's *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, (OG) available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines>

Applicants should provide only the information requested at this stage. Further information may be sought in due course.

(1) Name of Proposed World Heritage Site

The Royal Sites of Ireland - Navan Fort

(2) Geographical Location

Name of country/region

County Armagh

Grid reference to centre of site

8479 4513

Please enclose a map preferably A4-size, a plan of the site, and 6 photographs, preferably electronically.

(3) Type of Site

Please indicate category:

Natural Cultural Mixed Cultural Landscape

(4) Description

Please provide a brief description of the proposed site, including the physical characteristics. 200 words

Navan Fort is one of a number of sites on the island of Ireland traditionally associated with major royal inauguration, ceremony and assembly. The Republic of Ireland has proposed (following a review of its Tentative List) that Iron Age monument complexes representing each of the four Irish provinces - Ulster, Leinster, Munster and Connaught, as well as the region of Meath, are collectively of significant international importance. Navan Fort is the Ulster component and is located in Northern Ireland.

This site has been identified as Eamhain Macha, renowned in literature and tradition as the capital and residence of the Ulaid Kings of Ulster, after whom the Province is named. Archaeologically, the site is known throughout the world because it was the focus for the construction of a series of apparently ritual structures and associated events culminating around 100 BC. The site lies just to the west of the ecclesiastical capital at Armagh and can be associated with the transformation from paganism to Christianity under Saint Patrick.

The remains consist of a large almost circular enclosure, defined by a ditch and outer bank, around the summit of a glacial hill. A low circular ditched feature is visible close to the centre of the interior, with a tall mound nearby on the highest part of the hill.

(5) History

Please provide a short summary statement of any significant events in the history of the site. 200 words

The enclosure is thought to date from the Iron Age. The current mound was not the first structure built on the hilltop. Underneath, excavation has shown that there were at least three successive examples of large figure-of-eight buildings pre-dating its construction, all destroyed by fire, and with associated palisades forming approach 'avenues'. The mound has been dated to 95 BC and excavation has shown that the builders erected a large round building of four concentric rings of large, upright, oak posts, surrounded by a timber wall 40m in diameter. The building, may have had an openwork superstructure and was dominated by a large post at its centre. The mound builders then heaped stones inside the building to form a flat-topped cairn, the base of which was held in place against the inside of the wall of the timber building. After this, the wooden structure was deliberately set on fire and covered by a mound of turves. A favoured interpretation is that the mound was constructed as a focus for assemblies or public ceremonies, perhaps to provide an appropriate outdoor setting for royal inauguration. The Early Medieval tales known as the Ulster Cycle consistently portray the site, then called Emain Macha, as the headquarters of a warrior elite, presided over by a king with his attendants, champions and chief druid.

(6) Why do you think this site should be inscribed as a World Heritage Site?

Give reasons. 200 words

The site forms one part of a suite of related sites in Ireland which are large-scale Iron Age complexes with features in common and are traditionally recognised as prehistoric provincial royal capitals. Navan Fort was built in the Iron Age, a period in which settlements are virtually unknown in Ireland and it represents the ceremonial creation of a monument complex that was to be used in the future. Navan Fort and the other Iron Age provincial headquarter sites in Ireland are the last large-scale ceremonial monuments to have been built in prehistoric Europe. The extensive excavations carried out in the 1960s demonstrated the existence of large wooden buildings, ceremonially destroyed by fire and the enshrining of the buildings in a mound at the focal point of the earthwork enclosure. Similar large structures have been found in excavation at Dun Ailinne in Co. Kildare and Tara, Co. Meath. Geophysical survey is revealing the presence of equally exciting structures in the monuments at Rathcroghan, Co. Roscommon, the Connach headquarters.



(7) Please say why the site has Outstanding Universal Value and specify the main features which underpin its importance. 200 words

Situated on an elevated strategic location, Navan Fort represents a rare survival of a place of myth and legend that can also be identified in the archaeological record.

It is a site of religious and secular significance with evidence for continuing settlement over millennia. It is also part of a wider prehistoric landscape incorporating unusual and rare defensive and ritual sites which may reflect the crucial role of the complex in the evolving kingship of the Province.

The site is without parallel in W. Europe apart from the other Irish provincial Iron Age monument complexes, which are the culmination of development on these sites over a long period of time. The ceremonial structures find echoes in the early medieval literature of Ireland. The combination of the monuemnt complexes and the aspects of the tales associated with them may provide important links with the ideology at a state level of later pre-history in Europe.

(8) Outstanding Universal Value

Please state which of the [10 UNESCO criteria for Outstanding Universal Value](#) the proposed site meets, and describe briefly why the criteria were chosen. Please see criteria note at the end of the form.

UNESCO criterion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Why was this criterion chosen? 100 words
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UNESCO criterion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Why was this criterion chosen? 100 words
(i)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(ii)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(iii)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Navan Fort is part of a group of monumental sites that bear rare and exceptional testimony to Irish Iron Age archaeology in the first and second centuries BC. It reached its peak of activity at a time when much of Europe was increasingly coming under Roman influence and domination. The choice of Armagh in the 5 th century as the site of the ecclesiastical capital of Ireland may have been influenced by its proximity to the ancient ritual centres of Navan Fort 3km to the west.
(iv)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Navan Fort and its associated landscape illustrates significant stages in human history, with monuments stretching from the Neolithic period, through the Bronze Age and Iron Age to the Early Christian Period and later medieval centuries.
(v)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(vi)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Navan Fort, the historical Emain Macha, is directly associated with ancient traditions and belief systems. This can be traced in the wealth of literature describing folklore, myths and legends surrounding it. The great early Irish sagas Táin Bó Cúailgne and Táin Bó Fraích, with their tales of King Conchabar mac Nessa, the Red Branch Knights and CuChulainn were set at Navan Fort and other royal sites.
(vii)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(viii)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(ix)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(x)	<input type="checkbox"/>	

(9) Authenticity (for cultural or mixed sites only)

Authenticity concerns the current state of conservation of a cultural or mixed site; especially whether its importance, its Outstanding Universal Value, is still obvious from its physical condition. Please outline the condition of the site. 200 words

Navan Fort stands isolated in a ritual landscape. The earthenworks are substantially intact around most of its perimeter, c. 1 km in circumference, and only 10% of the interior area has been excavated. Important nearby sites in the vicinity such as Lough-na-shade, include a series of large Iron Age horns found in the late 18th century, also intact and in some cases visitable. There is already a well-appointed visitor centre about 1/2 km south of Navan Fort, which has won international awards and gives a well researched presentation of the archaeology of Navan Fort and the other prehistoric monuments in the vicinity. Many of the sites are in public ownership and are connected by informal walking routes.

(10) Integrity

For cultural or mixed sites, please state how much original fabric is included in the proposed site, and its condition. For guidance on how the test of integrity is met for natural sites under criteria (vii) – (x), please refer to the OG 90-94. Information Sheet 6 also provides help on this point. 200 words

Integrity:

The entire area of the fort is in State Care, as are several of the other monuments in the surrounding prehistoric landscape. Based on partial archaeological investigations Navan Fort is largely intact and has retained its original attributes. Overall it is well preserved and retain high visual landscape qualities. The central mound has been excavated and reconstituted, part of the adjacent hilltop and a small section of the enclosing ditch have also been excavated, but most of the interior of the fort remains undisturbed apart from the impact of agriculture prior to the site being taken into State Care.

A visitor centre, designed to blend into the landscape and reflect the major structure uncovered under the mound, is located to the south west of the site and is managed by Armagh City and District Council.

There are many books and articles concerned with Navan Fort, including a full publication of all excavations. A journal founded in 1986 and now numbering 20 issues is centred on the archaeology of Navan Fort and its associated literature.

(11) Are there other examples of this kind of site already on the World Heritage List?

Yes No

If yes, please list. 100 words

The World Heritage List contains only a few sites linked to early kingship and the transformation from Paganism to Christianity in Northern Europe, including: Jelling Mounds, Runic Stones and Church, Denmark (1994); Þingvellir National Park, Iceland (2004); Birka and Hovgården, Sweden (1993) and the Orkesta and Markim area, Sweden (Tentative List). There are no similar such inscriptions in countries like Norway, Finland, Germany, UK, and France. Although there are ritual and assembly sites of European Iron Age elsewhere, e.g. in Germany, UK/ Republic of Ireland and France, none of these are inscribed on the WH List.

(12) What distinguishes this site from other similar sites?

150 words

Collectively the Irish ritual sites constitute a group of four monument complexes which are similar to one another, but not to any other sites. The consistent presentation of Navan Fort in the early medieval tales of the Ulster Cycle as the royal headquarters of the province gives a unique opportunity for comparison and interpretation of features of the site with archaic aspects of the society portrayed in the tales.

(13) How does the site contribute to meeting UNESCO's priorities for a balanced World Heritage List?

200 words

In general, sites illustrating the early evolution of man during the Iron Age are underrepresented on the WH List.

(14) What benefits do you think World Heritage Site inscription would bring?

Please indicate the main opportunities and benefits.

Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tourism	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Regeneration	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Conservation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Protection	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Please describe. 100 words.

Though the site is already well protected and conserved. Enscription will ensure that the importance of these designations are clearly appreciated by the widest possible constituency and will help ensure that this important site continues to be preserved and conserved to the highest possible standards. The designation highlighting the links to other sites on the island will widen the public understanding of the site and help with education and tourism. Regeneration benefits flowing from enscription are likely to be small.

(15) Are there any known threats to the proposed World Heritage Site?

Yes No

Please indicate any proposed developments, or other potential impacts on the site.

Impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Please describe. 100 words for each issue.
Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	

(16) Legal Protection

Please list any legal and other protections, including cultural and natural designations, which cover the whole or part of the proposed site. 200 words

The main part of the site is a monument in state care under the ownership of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency
Most of the important structures in the surrounding area have been protected as scheduled monuments.
The wider area is also designated as an Area of Significant Archaeological Interest and identified in the local area plan as Area of Archaeological Potential.

(17) Ownership

Please list the main owners of the site, where possible.

The key site is owned by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency.
Armagh City and District Council run and operate the Navan Visitor Centre located at the site

Do the owners support the application? Yes No

A statement of support from the principle owners of the proposed site should be attached to the application, preferably electronically.

(18) Local Authority support for the site

Please list all Local Authorities with an interest in the proposed site.

Armagh City and District Council

Does the proposed site have local Authority support? Yes No

Please attach a statement of support from each one in relation to the application.

Please indicate whether the site is included in the local plan/s by specific policies.

Yes No Partly

Please describe. 200 words.

In addition to the Area Plan referred to above (16), the Council is committed to the sensitive conservation, usage and enjoyment of the site and the surrounding lands. To this end the Council has recently completed a Masterplan Strategy for the site which will outline how further enhancement and enjoyment of the important resource can be advanced

(19) Stakeholders

Please list the main parties with an interest in the site. 100 words

Armagh District Council
Northern Ireland Environment Agency

The council is fully supportive of advancing Navan as a site for World Heritage Status and this was indeed highlighted in a recent Tourism Review in 2008 on the overall tourism offering in Armagh. Locally other main tourism stakeholders are supportive and also to at a cross border level through the DMS.

As part of a serial nomination to UNSECO along with the Republic of Ireland, existing links with the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government and with the management of the other sites included would be strengthened and developed.

(20) How will the Site be managed?

Please outline the management arrangements for the proposed World Heritage Site, including where the responsibilities lie. 200 words

Armagh City and District Council will be responsible for operating and managing those areas of the Navan site and associated grounds which fall within its remit and will do this in conjunction with the NIEA who also has responsibility for the Fort. A strong history of collaboration already exists and going forward protocols, roles and responsibilities would be clearly defined

As part of a serial nomination to UNSECO along with the Republic of Ireland, existing links with the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government and with the management of the other sites included would be strengthened and developed.

(21) Funding: the nomination

Please indicate how the preparation of the nomination would be funded.
100 words

Armagh City and District Council will seek support from the other relevant agencies to assist in the development of the bid including the NIEA. Armagh has been identified as key Tourism area within the Northern Ireland Tourist Board Strategy 2020 and will investigate and explore potential support through this avenue also.

(22) Funding: management

Please outline how the future management would be funded. 100 words

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Name and Contact Details of Applicant

Name	Sharon O Gorman
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Email	

Completed applications should be forwarded, preferably in electronic format, to the World Heritage Team, Department for Culture, Media and Sport at the following email address: UKTL.Application@culture.gsi.gov.uk

Any material that cannot be sent electronically should be sent to the following address:

World Heritage Team, Department for Culture, Media and Sport
2-4 Cockspur Street
London
SW1 5DH

The closing date for applications is 11th June 2010

UNESCO's criteria for the assessment of Outstanding Universal Value (para 77 of the Operational Guidelines)

- (i) represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;
- (ii) exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;
- (iii) bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;
- (iv) be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;
- (v) be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;
- (vi) be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance.
- (vii) contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance;
- (viii) be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features;
- (ix) be outstanding examples representing significant ongoing ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals;
- (x) contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.